

## **IN THE CLAIMS**

This listing of the claim will replace all prior versions and listings of claim in the present application.

### **Listing of Claims**

1. (currently amended) A document search system comprising:  
an associative server which is capable of instructing a document search by specifying a document database  $j$  to be searched next among a plurality of document databases based on a search result of a generated from a previous search of a document database  $i$ , comprising: and  
an associative search recording table which records the recording the a number of times  $x_{ij}$  of searching a said document database  $j$  based on a the search result results of a generated from the previous searches of said document database  $i$ .
2. The document search system according to claim 1, further comprising:  
means for changing a showing order of document databases to be searched by using data from said associative search recording table.
3. The document search system according to claim 1, wherein ~~a differing~~ said a different associative search recording table is stored for each user, and, by using said different associative search recording table for each user, a showing order of document databases to be searched is changed according to a said user.
4. The document search system according to claim 1, further comprising:

means for calculating a registration fee of each document database by using said associative search recording table.

5. The document search system according to claim 4, wherein a registration fee is calculated according to a sum of ~~a~~the number of times a document database is of being a search origin for a document search and ~~a~~the number of times a document database is of being a search target for a document search.

6. A search server for mediating between a search client and a plurality of document databases, comprising:

associative ~~the search server~~ means which is being capable of instructing a document search by specifying a document database i to be searched next among a plurality of document databases based on a search result of a generated from a previous search of a document database i, comprising:

wherein said associative server means comprises:

search query analyzing means for analyzing a search query from said search client;<sub>i,1</sub>

search query constructing means for sending the search query analyzed by said search query analyzing means to the document database specified by the search client;<sub>i,1</sub>

means for sending a search result of said specified document database to said search client;<sub>i,1</sub> and

associative search recording table storing means for storing an associative search recording table ~~recording a~~which records the number of times  $x_{ij}$  of searching ~~asaid~~ document database j based on ~~a~~the search result~~results of a~~generated from the previous searches of said document database i.

7. The search server according to claim 6, wherein said associative server means further comprises: comprising:

showing order changing means for changing a showing order of document databases to be searched and to be shown to said search client by using data from said associative search recording table.

8. The search server according to claim ~~6~~7, wherein comprising said associative search recording table storing means which stores a~~a~~ different associative search recording table for each user, and

wherein said ~~the~~ showing order changing means ~~for changing~~changes a showing order of document databases to be searched and to be shown to said search client according to asaid user by using said different associative search recording table for each user.

9. (original) The search server according to claim 6, wherein a registration fee of each document database is calculated by using said associative search recording table stored by said associative search recording table storing means.

10. (currently amended) The document search system according to claim 1, wherein for each document database j of a said plurality of select document databases, the said associative search recording table has plural entries with ~~differing entries for recording a respective~~ each indicating the number of times  $x_{ij}$  of searching the document database j based on ~~a the~~ search result results generated from the previous searches of ~~of differing ones of~~ document databases i, respectively.

11. (currently amended) The document search system according to claim 1, ~~comprising storing, in the~~ wherein said associative search recording table, ~~a records~~ the number of times  $x_{ij}$  of searching a said document database j based on a search result using ~~of~~ a keyword i.

12. (currently amended) The document search system according to claim 11, wherein for each document database j of said a plurality of select document databases, the said associative search recording table has plural entries with ~~differing entries for recording a respective~~ each indicating the number of times  $x_{ij}$  of searching the document database j databases based on ~~the a~~ search results generated from the previous searches of ~~of differing ones of~~ document databases or keywords i, respectively.

13. (currently amended) The search server according to claim 6, wherein for each document database databases, of a said plurality of select-document databases, the said associative search recording table has plural entries with ~~differing entries for recording a respective~~ each indicating the number of times  $x_{ij}$  of searching the document database  $j$  based on a the search result ~~results generated~~ from the previous searches of ~~of differing ones of document databases  $i$ ,~~ respectively.

14. (currently amended) The search server according to claim 6, ~~comprising storing, the~~ wherein said associative search recording table, ~~a~~ records the number of times  $x_{ij}$  of searching a document database  $j$  based on a search result of a keyword  $i$ .

15. (currently amended) The search server according to claim 14, wherein for each document database  $j$ , of a said plurality of select-document databases, the said associative search recording table has plural entries with ~~differing entries for recording a respective~~ each indicating the number of times  $x_{ij}$  of searching the document database  $j$  based on a the search result ~~results generated from the~~ previous searches of ~~of differing ones of document databases or keywords  $i$ ,~~ respectively.

16. (currently amended) A document search method comprising the steps of: enabling

instructing a document search by specifying a document database  $j$  to be searched next among a plurality of document databases based on a search result generated from a previous search of a document database  $i$ , ~~comprising:~~

storing an associative search recording table which records the ~~recording a~~ number of times  $X_{ij}$  of searching asaid document database  $j$  based on a ~~the~~ search result ~~results generated from the previous searches of said~~ of a document database  $i$ ; and,

using data from ~~the said~~ associative search recording table to help specify said a document database  $j$  to be searched next among said a plurality of document databases.

17. (currently amended) A document search method according to claim 16, comprising the steps of:

changing a showing order of document databases to be searched by using data from said associative search recording table.

18. (currently amended) A document search method according to claim 16, wherein a ~~differing said~~ different associative search recording table is stored for each user, and, by using said different associative search recording table for each user, a showing order of document databases to be searched is changed according to asaid user.

19. (currently amended) A document search method according to claim 16,

comprising the steps of: calculating a registration fee of each document database by using said associative search recording table.

20. (currently amended) A document search method according to claim 19, comprising the steps of:

calculating the registration fee according to the a sum of a number of times of ~~being a document database is a~~ search origin for a document search and a the number of times of ~~being a document database is a~~ search target for a document search.

21. (currently amended) A document search method according to claim 16, wherein for each document database j of ~~a~~ said plurality of select document databases, ~~the said~~ associative search recording table has plural entries with ~~differing entries for recording a respective~~ each indicating the number of times  $X_{ij}$  of searching the document database j based on a the search result ~~results generated~~ from the previous searches of said ~~of differing ones of~~ document databases i, respectively.

22. (currently amended) A document search method according to claim 16, comprising the steps of:

storing, in the associative search recording table, a the number of times  $X_{ij}$  of searching a document database j based on a search result of a keyword i.

23. (currently amended) A document search method according to claim 22, wherein for each document database  $j$  of ~~a~~said plurality of ~~select~~ document databases, the ~~said~~ associative search recording table has plural entries with ~~differing entries for recording a respective~~each indicating the number of times  $X_{ij}$  of searching the document database  $j$  based on ~~a~~the search result ~~results generated from the previous searches of said~~ ~~of differing ones of~~ document databases or keywords  $i$ , respectively.